



POST-EVENT SUMMARY OF PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS

(As at 28 September 2016)

Monday 5 September: 2:30pm – 5:30pm

Room: Royal

Symposium

Early Career Professionals Event

Key Organisers:

Dr Jeffrey Dutschke

Centre for Automotive Safety Research - University of Adelaide

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Overview:

What does a Road Safety Officer do? How do I make a car bridge using only straws and sticky tape? Who makes a successful road safety researcher? How do you fit a car seat for a mobility-impaired child? Who are you, and what do you do?

These were five of the big questions that were addressed at the inaugural Early Career Professionals Event held at the Road Safety Conference in Canberra.

35 early career professionals with a road safety background converged on the event. The backgrounds of the early career professionals included academic researchers, traffic police, local government employees, medical doctors and mobile app developers.

The focus of the event was to bring together people at a similar stage of their career (that is, somewhere near the beginning) and allow them to introduce themselves. Along the way, they had a bit of fun and (hopefully) learnt something new about road safety.



Early career professionals smiling for the camera

Summary/Outcome:

Meeting new friends in the Road Safety Community

The main aim of the event was to meet a new friend or six. This was encouraged by allocating people into groups and asking them to come up with a research proposal that captured the skills of everyone in the group. My group came up with an idea to study the benefits (the researchers) of using a fleet of Uber like drivers (the app developer) to act in a pseudo-ambulance capacity (a medical doctor interested in primary at-scene care) for those injured in Sri Lankan traffic crashes (where two people were from). As an idea it may not receive funding from any agency, but I remember what the people on my table did and where they were from.

To help recognise each other at the conference proper, participants were issued with a cool little sticker to put on their conference name badges. In the following days at the conference a mini secret society seemed to exist – if you saw someone with the little sticker you could nod knowingly toward them (and then strike up a conversation).

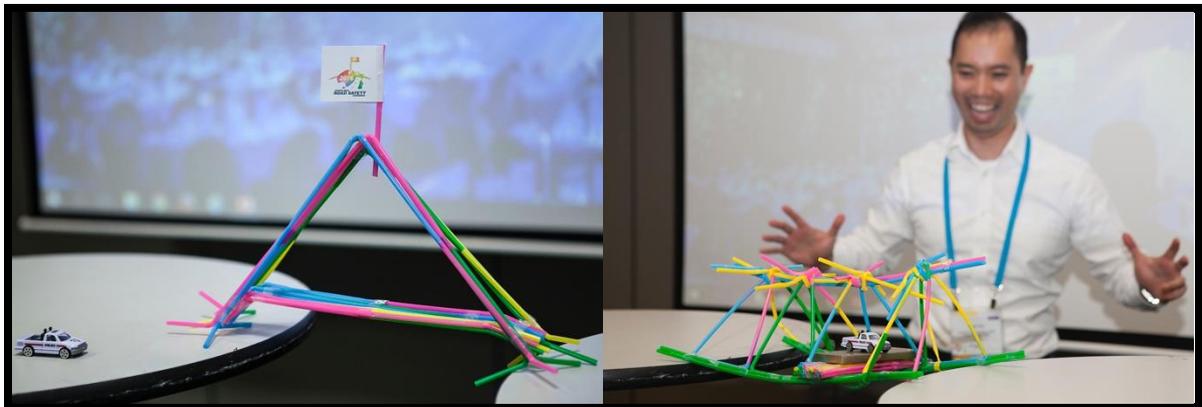


Check out the name badges with their attached secret society sticker

Tea, coffee, croissants and fruit were the beverages and foodstuffs that fuelled the afternoon's activities and the conversations. They must have worked, because a lot of conversation was had over these nourishing morsels during the afternoon tea break.

Having a bit of fun

The participants, again allocated into groups, were issued with a roll of sticky tape, a pack of drinking straws and a pair of scissors and told to build a bridge to hold a (heavy) roadway and a matchbox car. To the surprise of some, and the expectations of others, a few of the bridges actually held up! A special prize went to the group that decorated their successful bridge with the flag of the Road Safety Conference. While the rest of the workshop helped build metaphorical bridges in the road safety community, this particular session aimed at the more literal interpretation of bridge building.



The bridges were built literally (above) and metaphorically (below)



Learning something new

To break up the time spent meeting new people and consuming afternoon tea, there were three guest speakers at the event.

Jo Wilson-Ridley from Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (in the ACT) spoke about her role as a road safety officer in her current and former regional councils. She talked about the people she had to interact with on a day-to-day basis and the challenges she faced in, for example, coordinating the installation of new infrastructure. Pleasingly, a few people approached Jo after the event to discuss the realities of what a career as a road safety officer might look like as they transition out of student life.

Professor Paul Salmon from the University of the Sunshine Coast gave his top 10 tips for being a successful researcher. One of the tips was that we should know and record our impact: that is how society has changed because of our research. For a new researcher, it was pretty inspiring stuff and gave a lot of really useful information that is not talked about enough.

Jes Chalmers described her work as the general manager of KidSafe ACT. She has had bucket loads of experience across the organisation. She showed immense pride in her detailed work with children who have special needs for their car seat designs. It was plainly clear that she makes a genuinely positive contribution to the lives of the people she is able to help out.



(Clockwise from top left)Jes, Jo and Paul

Thanks

We would like to say a big thankyou to:

- The ACT Government for supporting the idea financially
- The guest speakers for their excellent presentations
- Eric Chalmers for the ACT chapter of the ACRS for helping organise some of the guest speakers
- The participants for joining in the activities and making the day really great

Next year

We want to do it again next year. It was a great event with lots of new people introduced to each other and chatting during the conference. Next year in Perth there will be another mini-secret society of name-badge sticker-wearers because we want to hold another event with a similar focus; meeting some new people, having a bit of fun, and learning something new.

For further information please read the [ARSC2016 Wrap-Up e-Alert](#) here, or contact the organiser:

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Early career Professionals

The Early Career Professionals Event is for all ARSC2016 attendees who are in the early stages of their career.

Professionals from all road safety areas are encouraged to attend including those from academic institutions, police, government, advocacy and community groups, engineers, or corporate organisations – anyone who has recently started working in the profession.

The program will include guest speakers, afternoon tea and plenty of opportunity to meet with your peers in road safety from across Australasia.

The Early Career Professionals Event will be held at the National Convention Centre on Monday afternoon prior to the pre-conference networking function.

Date: Monday 5 September 2016

Time: 2:30pm– 5:30pm

Where: National Convention Centre, Canberra

Who: All early career professionals
(nominally within their first 8 years, including students)

Cost: Included in conference registration.

**The pre-conference networking reception will follow
at the same venue at the conclusion of this event.**

**For questions please contact
Jeffrey Dutschke at: jeff@casr.adelaide.edu.au**

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